

Congregational Passover Seder

Thursday, April 17, 6:30 pm
Holiday Inn Golden Gateway
\$42 adult members/\$50 nonmembers/
\$21 all children

Passover is just around the corner. Bring your family and friends to our annual second-night congregational seder, a Sha'ar Zahav tradition. For this year's seder, we will be returning to the Holiday Inn Golden Gateway, 1500 Van Ness at California St., a site we used before the Officers' Club (which has closed). Rabbi Camille Shira Angel, Joan Goldman and Howard Steiermann will lead the seder. We encourage you to bring your entire family, as the seder will be both child and adult friendly. There will be fabulous Afikomen prizes, not to be missed. Return the enclosed reservation form to the CSZ office before April 4. The deadline is important to ensure that we order the correct number of meals. If you have any questions about this year's seder, please contact Melanie Kushnir (x305 or mkushnir@shaarzahav.org).

How To Host A Passover Seder Or Get The Most Out Of The Ones You Attend

Wednesday, April 9, 7 pm

Pesach is one of the most important of Jewish festivals. We observe it in the early spring, a time of rebirth and renewal and, although we do have community seders, it is a wonderful home celebration, with emphasis on family, friends, children and learning. Passover has food (of course), wine and ritual. It is the ultimate example of history and tradition linking our present with our past.

If the process of hosting a seder seems overwhelming, or if you or your guests seem to spend the seder waiting for the meal, this class is for you. In examining the details – like the internal and external preparations, how to guide the focus of the ceremony, what (and what not) to skip, choosing an haggadah, preparing the seder table and its symbols – we'll actually be looking at the history and meaning of this most ancient Jewish celebration.

Whether you're an old hand at holding a seder, have attended many (but never your own) or are new to the tradition, join Garry Koenigsberg for an educational and enjoyable evening.

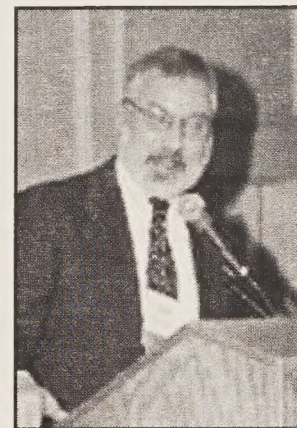
continued on page 9

CSZ Co-Founder Daniel Chesir Honored By UAHC

Daniel Chesir, CSZ co-founder and past president, was installed as President of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) Pacific Central West Region at the Regional Biennial in February. As president, Daniel will work with Region Director Rabbi Michael Berk to lead the work of the region, which provides an array of important programs and services to all of the Reform congregations in Northern California, Nevada, Utah and Hawaii.

Daniel's installation was historic because his election symbolizes the incredible journey to integration that Sha'ar Zahav and our sister LGBT congregations have made within the Reform movement. Twenty-five years ago, when Daniel helped found CSZ, we were not a visible part of any national movement. We have gone beyond acceptance and now have our rightful place in leadership.

In his remarks to the delegates who attended the Biennial, Daniel acknowledged how far he and Sha'ar Zahav as a congregation have progressed over these 25 years. He also expressed his appreciation for how the Reform movement has embraced diversity in the last several decades.



At the same time that Daniel was elected to serve as the Regional President, another CSZ past president, Diana Buchbinder, was elected as a member of the Regional Council. Past president Mike Rankin continues to serve on the National UAHC Board.

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Rebuilding Together is Coming Up Fast!

On April 27, the CSZ team of volunteers will join teams throughout the city as well as thousands of other teams across the country to provide repairs and improvements for low-income homeowners or non-profits. Our project promises to be exciting and fun. We will work alongside volunteer teams from Brandeis Hillel Day School and Jewish Family and Children's Services at RCH (formerly called "Recreation Center for the Handicapped"). Since 1952, RCH has provided daily and weekend services for adults, children and seniors who have developmental disabilities or head injuries. The services RCH provides are invaluable and our project there will allow them to focus less on their facility problems and more on the care of their clients.

No construction experience is necessary and much of the work is not difficult or technical. The project includes large amounts of painting, adding non-slip treads to different areas of the facility, cleaning rust from play areas, brainstorming on improving displays, building a shed for toys, lots of gardening and planting. RCH is located on 5 1/2 acres alongside Lake Merced, so we can look forward to spending the day in a beautiful setting. Come join fellow CSZers in this important act of Tikkun Olam.

Look for the sign-up sheet insert included in this issue of the JGF or contact Lele and Rachel Field (415/454-7377 or lelerachel@lelerachel.com).



From the Rabbi's Study

In countless folktales, Elijah the prophet, a symbol of redemption, appears at our doorways as a poor, hungry wanderer. We invite him in, let him warm up and give him some food to satisfy his hunger and a coat to keep him warm. Redemption, we learn from these stories, happens in the most basic acts of loving kindness.

Our sages of old were realists who knew *im ein kemach, ein Torah* – if there is no money, there is no Torah. They also knew the converse, *im ein Torah ein kemach* – if

there is no Torah, there is no money. If there is no learning or if we do not treat money the way the tradition instructs us, we are not worthy of its benefits.

Many of the laws concerning money in Judaism fall under the category of *tzedakah*. Although many Jews try to separate the act of writing a check from other religious aspects of our tradition, the Talmud teaches that “*Tzedakah* is equal in importance to all the other commandments combined” (*Bava Batra* 9a). Jacob Neusner writes in his book entitled *Tzedakah*, “*Tzedakah* is the highest expression of the holy way of living taught by Torah.”

In fact, the Hebrew word for donation or offering is *terumah*, which is derived from the root *ramah*, meaning elevation. By giving, we, in fact, become elevated. We are a little “higher,” a little better than we were before.

In this season of Pesach, Festival of our Liberation, I hope you’ll respond generously to our Fund for the Future Campaign. For over 25 years, Sha’ar Zahav has enabled LGBT Jews to redeem our heritage and claim our rightful place within the tradition. Now, more than ever, the synagogue needs our assistance.

Blessed is the Source of Life who elevates us to sacredness and bids us to immerse ourselves fully in the activities of Torah.

Trusting Our “Queer Jewish Kishkes”

The success of our 25th Anniversary Scholar-in-Residence Weekend with Rabbi Benay Lappe has continued to reverberate. If you are interested in having the opportunity to continue to study texts from the perspective of our “queer Jewish kishkes,” please be in touch with our Adult Education Committee. This is what some of our CSZers had to say:

“As queer Jews, we have all gone through our ups and downs, questioning both our faith and our sexuality. This past weekend helped so many people really fuse together their spiritual and sexual identities. It is always nice to be validated. Thank you from the bottom of my very full heart.” - Alan Foss

“I found studying Talmud with Rabbi Benay to be fun!! In fact, as a result of the

session, my chevruta partner for that mini-lesson on Saturday decided to be my ongoing chevruta partner.” – Patricia Lin

“Your [Rabbi Lappe’s] method of text study using literal-but-not-interpretive translation is, quite simply, brilliant. It perfectly captured the feel of what it’s like to study the text in the original. I have no idea if this is your original method or it has been around for a while – it’s so ingenious in its effectiveness and simplicity that it should be a standard method of teaching when translation is required. Yet in the 15 years since I turned my attention to Jewish stuff, I’ve never seen it before.” – Steve Mazer

“The weekend of study was simply the most transformative experience I have ever had in all my years in the Sha’ar Zahav community, bar none. It was just the right combination of Intellectuality, Inclusivity and Inspiration (the 3 “I’s”) – all the things I’ve been hungering for in my Jewish experience. In short, it was Sha’ar Zahav at its best.

“For those who were unable to attend, Rabbi Lappe’s thesis, I think, is that we LGBT Jews needn’t fear or be alienated from Jewish tradition and halacha, because that halacha contains within it all the mechanisms we need to bring about fundamental, radical changes in Jewish life, just as the tradition has done for us for over 2,000 years during times of historical and spiritual crisis. She argues forcefully – and demonstrated quite convincingly – that all we need to do is to start owning those mechanisms of change and start using them. She illustrated this by breathing life and vitality into some fascinating examples from Talmud, which left me hungering for more of this type of learning. There are few things in this world that turn me on more than intellectual courage and activism, which is what Rabbi Lappe is all about.” – Michael Sarid

“In addition to the many historical and Talmudic insights provided by Benay Lappe during her various talks, the wonderful, spirited singing of Marsha Attie and Jennifer Frost during Shabbat services made for an especially moving and memorable weekend. I look forward to more such programs in the future!” - Jon Zimman

“Thanks to all who arranged the visit of Rabbi Lappe. I felt her sermon was profound.” - Jerry Geffner

The Jewish Gaily Forward

April 2003

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Judith Cohen, Marjorie Hilsenrad,
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- Advertising:
Roslyn Fuerman (510/526-1209 or
froslyn@earthlink.net)
- Design and layout:
Dale Murphy
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Reuben Zellman Accepted to Rabbinic School

Interview by Rose Katz

CSZ member Reuben Zellman has been accepted to the Reform Movement's Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion as a rabbinical student. Currently a student in the music program at San Francisco State University, Reuben has shared his considerable talents with the congregation over the last four years as a service leader, sermonizer, cantorial soloist and composer. He currently teaches Hebrew to the East Bay mid-week Kadimah class.

JGF: What led to your decision to apply to rabbinic school?

Reuben: I grew up in the Reform Movement, although my family wasn't very observant. A couple of years ago I decided that I wanted to study Jewish music seriously and become a cantor. There is a fabulous wealth of music in the Jewish tradition and I was drawn to the idea of studying Jewish music in a liturgical setting. The spiritual component of the music was what was important to me. Then last summer when I was studying Yiddish at Columbia University, I met a rabbi who pointed out that I could do a broader range of things that were important to me if I went to rabbinic school instead. You can be a rabbi and still sing, but there is less opportunity as a cantor to speak.

JGF: How has CSZ influenced your development?

Reuben: CSZ *caused* my development! It has been the single most important factor in my life of the last several years. I walked into Sha'ar Zahav at the age of 20 at a really low point in my life. I was beginning my gender transition (from female to male) and had to drop out of UC Berkeley to go to work. I had a terrible job which paid poorly, and my family was struggling with my gender identity. Things were not looking good. Sometimes when you're really alone, "someone" does something. I walked into Sha'ar Zahav one Friday night not knowing anyone and not really knowing why I had come, but when we got to the Barchu, I started to cry. I came back every week after that. Initially I was coming back because of a tradition that was familiar to me. What I didn't realize was that there was a whole community of people who cared about what happened to me. So many people were encouraging. Steve



Reuben Zellman

Elman, whom I barely knew, would ask me every week when I was going back to school. Soon I realized that it wasn't just him; there were a *hundred* Steve Elmans in this community who saw things in me that I didn't yet see in myself. I got back into music because people at CSZ insisted on it. Michael Sarid kept at me to come to the Singing Chavurah and bring my compositions. Rabbi Angel introduced me to Cantor Bentley, who invested a huge amount of time teaching me the High Holiday liturgy so that I could be the cantorial soloist at a small congregation in the South Bay. No one cared that I didn't have experience. There was a wave of encouragement that just wouldn't go away.

JGF: What would you like to accomplish as a rabbi?

Reuben: I want to take what I've learned at CSZ to other places – our values of lay leadership, inclusiveness, actively living Judaism. Everyone should have the opportunity to experience that. There is a lot of work to be done around queer and transgender issues. I have learned unique things here that would be helpful to our development as a people.

JGF: How do you think Judaism will change as a result of your becoming the first transgender rabbinical candidate?

Reuben: The exciting thing is that we don't know. Any challenge presents the opportunity for the Jewish community to rise to it and apply Jewish values to the challenge. So far, it's happened. The selection committee at HUC-JIR could just as easily have chosen not to deal with this issue, but instead they did. My mother just

told a friend of hers, "I'm so proud to be a Jew." CSZ provided concrete ways of making the world better one life at a time. Now the Reform movement is ready to move on this. Anything that makes the movement more inclusive is a good thing.

JGF: Is there anything you'd like to say in conclusion?

Reuben: I want to say thank you to the whole congregation. I want the congregation to understand how much good it has done and can do. It has taught me how much power we have to better other people's lives. I want all the Steve Elmans to understand how much they matter. It is a real credit to CSZ that I could have walked in here such a mess and be headed to rabbinic school four years later!

JGF: We all wish you the best of luck. Mazel tov! We are enormously proud of you.

Torah Trope Classes at CSZ

**Tuesdays, May 6 – June 17, 7 – 8:30 pm
(no class meeting on May 20)**

This spring, CSZ offers you the opportunity to learn Torah chanting. This introductory Torah trope class will be taught by CSZ's own Ron Edelman and will begin on Tuesday, May 6. There will be a total of six weekly sessions, running through June 17 (please note that the class will not meet on May 20). You must be able to read basic Hebrew, but an advanced knowledge and understanding of Hebrew is not necessary. Cost is \$36 for CSZ members, \$72 for non-members. Class size is limited. To RSVP or for more information, please contact Melanie Kushnir (x305 or mkushnir@shaarzahav.org).

New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained the following new members this month. A warm welcome to the most recent people to join our family:

Larry Cohen and Tom Taylor
Aimee Durfee

We are grateful to see our congregation grow. It is up to all of us to help our new members feel welcome as they become active participants in our community.



Social Action Connection

by Susan Lubeck

Opportunities to become involved:

- Make a difference in a day and see the tangible results: Rebuilding Together, Sunday April 27. See article on page 1.
- Contribute to the Pesach food drive (see below).
- Have dinner with homeless neighbors, Wednesdays at Most Holy Redeemer (in the Castro), any time from 4 to 9 p.m. Contact Jay Davidson (teacher@jaydavidson.com, 415/861-2444). Stay tuned for a new youth-only dinner on Monday nights.
- Attend the National Center for Lesbian Rights Gala Dinner with fellow CSZers on May 24 (more below).
- Help plan a retrospective on twenty-five years of activism in the LGBT movement in conjunction with CSZ's twenty-fifth anniversary. Contact A.J. Turpen (ajsparkles@mac.com, 415/437-6869 before 9 pm).
- Come to the quarterly Committee meeting on Monday, May 5, 6 – 8:30 pm. Reflect, connect and create the future of our social action work.

B'nei Mitzvah Youth at Most Holy Redeemer

On February 19, CSZ's b'nei mitzvah class joined with Social Action and volunteered at Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Church. They were accompanied by Phyllis Mintzer and Naomi Szoke, mother of bar mitzvah student Red Bennett.

"It was especially wonderful to be there with the kids," Naomi said of the experience. "They have the idealism that we should all hope to retain through our adult lives. They set to work, unself-consciously, to help and did it with grace."

Many thanks to the students and Phyllis! We're also grateful to Naomi for organizing this and to Susan Mizner who met

with the youth ahead of time to provide a social policy context. Are you interested in supporting more work linking CSZ youth with social action? If so, contact Naomi Szoke (naomi@maccounsel.com) or A.J. Turpen.

Forum on Iraq and North Korea

On Monday, February 24, about 20 people came out on a rainy night and participated in a discussion led by CSZ member and UC Berkeley International and Area Studies Professor Alan Karras. He presented the Bush administration's arguments for why the U.S. should attack Iraq and talked about how those represent a substantial change in foreign policy. He encouraged us to think about the long-term effects of the Bush administration's policy of preemption, such as what happens next if we're successful in Iraq – do we pursue a first strike against other countries in the "Axis of Evil"?

He also presented some background on North Korea and cited many sources that believe that North Korea is using the nuclear threat to get the U.S. to the negotiating table, in order to try and feed its population.

The group had a lively and intelligent discussion, which ranged from the economic causes and effects of this potential war, the effects (or lack thereof) of protests and public opinion upon the Bush administration and the background and politics of Bush's foreign policy team. We also tried to create a long-term vision for mitigating the foreign policy shift.

Thanks in particular to Sharyn Saslaffsky and Jim Frazin for putting this event together and to Alan Karras for donating his time and expertise.

Enjoy the NCLR Gala with CSZ on May 24

Enhance CSZ's visibility in the community while supporting the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR), a pioneering

advocate for equal rights for all LGBT people and our families. NCLR's annual Gala Dinner Dance, which draws an enthusiastic crowd of two thousand, will be held on Saturday, May 24 at Moscone Center.

Lonnie Weiss and the CSZ Social Action Committee have committed to filling two tables of ten people. Tickets are \$200 per person. To reserve your space among your CSZ peers and pals, contact Lonnie (415/255-1641 or i.weiss@attbi.com).

To learn more about the Gala or NCLR's groundbreaking work, click on www.NCLRights.org.

Passover Food Drive

April 1 -15 and April 25 – May 4

Passover is a holiday that is commonly associated with food: food at the seder and food that we avoid eating because it contains chametz (unleavened bread).

This year, when you prepare for Passover by cleaning your homes and lives of chametz, be it physically or symbolically, please consider giving food to those who need it by participating in the CSZ Passover Food Drive.

The food drive will take place during the weeks before and after Passover. Bins will be placed in the synagogue lobby to collect nonperishable foods. Particularly needed are tuna, stew, chili, vegetables, fruit, pasta sauce, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter, sports drinks, 100% juice, supplement bars, soy or rice milk, rice and pasta. All food should be in sealed cans, boxes, bags or plastic containers – no glass please.

The food will be donated to Project Open Hand, the San Francisco Food Bank or other organizations. Please bring a bag when you attend services, drop off your child for Kadimah or participate in other synagogue events. You will be doing a great mitzvah.

Questions? Contact Patricia Lin (510/527-8127) or Melanie Kushnir in the office (x305).

Pinat Yeladim O'mishpachah

Children and Family Corner



Kadimah Teacher of the Month: Mira Waser

Mira Waser joined the Kadimah staff this year. Mira, a native Israeli, has lived in the U.S. for 23 years. She is the mother of three grown children, a graduate of the S.F. Art Institute and a singer. Mira has taught painting, Hebrew and singing at Congregation Beth Shalom and elsewhere in the Bay Area. When not teaching, Mira is working on her art and singing Sephardic music around town.

Mira teaches Kitah Hey (5th/6th grade) on Wednesday afternoons and works once a month with Ge'avah (K-1st grade) families. Mira brings dramatic flair to her work – infusing her teaching with art, drama and music. Mira thinks big. She is especially enthusiastic about making sure that her older students fully experience and appreciate the Hebrew language. Mira's energy is infectious. Kol HaKavod!

Tot Shabbat

Saturday, April 26, 10:30 am - noon

Come celebrate Shabbat with your tot. Bring your two- to five-year-olds for singing, prayer, storytelling, crafts and family Jewish fun with Sandra Menachem, Early Childhood Education Specialist.

Younger siblings and non-members are welcome. Tot Shabbat meets the last Saturday of the month.

Baby Chavurah

Sunday, April 20, 10 am - noon, place TBA

Bring those under twos out to play, sing and commune with like-minded babes and their parents. Join us for potluck brunch, playtime and socializing. This month we meet at the synagogue. Please bring your baby and a vegetarian dish to share. Older

siblings are welcome, as are non-members. Baby Chavurah meets every three weeks.

CSZ Community Retreat at Walker Ranch in Petaluma

Friday, May 30 - Sunday June 1

The CSZ Community Retreat is intended to enrich your connection with the shul. You will have the opportunity to take part in informal art and educational activities, study and worship while enjoying the weekend. Relax and interact with our rabbi and other members. Watch for the Early Bird registration form. If you would like more information please contact Sue Bojdak.

Sue is back from maternity leave.

Please contact Sue (x302 or
sbojdak@shaarzahav.org)

for more information about any of these programs or to RSVP.

Relive the Exodus

Saturday, April 12, 9 am - noon

See Moses and Aaron confront Pharaoh. Follow in the footsteps of the Israelites, as, guided by biblical text, they wend their way to freedom. Bake matzah. Experience a seder in the wilderness. Bring your robes and sandals and prepare to have fun!

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There is NO KADIMAH on
Wednesday, April 16 or
Saturday April 19

April 2003

May Deadline: Monday, March 31, 5pm

Articles

Please submit your articles as a Word attachment via email to: newsletter@shaarzahav.org. *No late submissions will be accepted.*

Advertising

To place a display ad, contact Roslyn Fuerman (510/526-1209 or froslyn@earthlink.net). To place a classified ad, call the office.

Do You Have Items for the Naches Column?

We'd love to publish them.
Please contact the office and
give us your good news!

<div>Do You Have Items for the Naches Column?</div> <div>We'd love to publish them. Please contact the office and give us your good news!</div>		Tuesday	Wednesday
		1 Adar II - 28	2 Adar II - 29
		6:30 pm Prayerbook Hebrew II	4 pm Midweek Kadimah 7 pm JGF editing
Sunday	Monday	Passover Food Drive	
6 Nisan - 4	7 Nisan - 5	8 Nisan - 6	9 Nisan - 7
7 pm June Bride performance at Marin Osher JCC 7 pm JGF proofreading		6:30 pm Prayerbook Hebrew II	4 pm Midweek Kadimah 7 pm How to Host a Seder
Passover Food Drive			
13 Nisan - 11	14 Nisan - 12	15 Nisan - 13	16 Nisan - 14
			Erev Passover Office closed at Noon No Kadimah
Passover Food Drive			
20 Nisan - 18	21 Nisan - 19	22 Nisan - 20	23 Nisan - 21
10 am Baby Chavurah	7 pm Keshet Committee	4 pm East Bay Kadimah	4 pm Midweek Kadimah
Passover			
27 Nisan - 25	28 Nisan - 26	29 Nisan - 27	30 Nisan - 28
Rebuilding Together		Yom Hasho'ah 4 pm East Bay Kadimah	4 pm Midweek Kadimah
Passover Food Drive			

Adar II - Nisan 5763

SAVE THE DATE:
Saturday evening, June 21
for CSZ's Silver Party: 25 Years of Pride

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 Nisan - 1	4 Nisan - 2	5 Nisan - 3
	7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel, Rueben Zellman	9 am Torah Study 9:30 am Kadimah 10 am Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel, Andy Fyne, Clarissa Kripke
Passover Food Drive		
10 Nisan - 8	11 Nisan - 9	12 Nisan - 10
6:30 pm Va'ad Meeting	7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Patricia Lin	9 am Torah Study 9 am Relive the Exodus 9:30 am Kadimah 10 am Shabbat Services led by Ron Edelman
Passover Food Drive		
17 Nisan - 15	18 Nisan - 16	19 Nisan - 17
<i>Office closed</i> 6:30 pm Congregational Seder, led by Rabbi Angel, Joan Goldman, Howard Steiermann	7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Rabbi Angel, Alisa Fineman	9 am Torah Study 10 am Shabbat Services led by Ora Prochovnick, Joan Goldman No Kadimah
Passover		
24 Nisan - 22	25 Nisan - 23	26 Nisan - 24
<i>Office closed</i> 6:30 pm Ritual Committee	7:30 pm Shabbat Services led by Rachel Maclachlan, Anna Lichtenberg	9 am Torah Study 9:30 am Kadimah 10 am Shabbat Services led by Dev Felder Noily, Adult B'nei Mitzvah class 10:30 am Tot Shabbat
Passover Food Drive		



From the Jewish Toolkit

A Pesach Primer

The Jewish Tool Kit is confident that most people have seen the 1956 film *The Ten Commandments*, and she is grateful to her colleague in Jewish education, Cecil B. DeMille, for providing an entertaining and informative overview of the Pesach story. Of course, the book is even better than the movie, so the Jewish Tool Kit calls your attention to the Book of Exodus, chapters 1-20. It's a real page-turner.

In practical terms, we observe Pesach in three ways. First, we refrain from eating, or even possessing, leavened bread, which is called *chametz* (technically *chametz* is any form of wheat, rye, barley, oats or spelt that has come in resting contact with water for at least 18 minutes, thus beginning the leavening process). Second, we specifically *do* eat *unleavened* bread, which we all know as matzah (and continuing our chemistry lesson, matzah is flour and water that is mixed and baked in less than 18 minutes, before leavening happens). Third, we recount the story of the Exodus through a seder, which is a festive meal with specific prayers, songs, rituals and symbols. The story and rituals are contained in a book called a haggadah, which means "telling." Now, over the centuries the rabbis really went to town with additional laws and details, and not to be outdone, communities everywhere developed many more customs. These laws and customs range, as they say, from the sublime to the ridiculous; some are actually worth knowing. But this brief summary is the gist of Pesach observance, and for now The Jewish Tool Kit thinks it's sufficient.

Pesach is a somewhat schizophrenic holiday. The word *seder* literally means *order*, and in many respects it is the most rigid ritual that we have. At the same time, the haggadah itself states that "in every generation, we must each view ourselves as if we were personally redeemed from Egypt." So it is also the most personal of experiences, where we go beyond the written text and literally make ourselves part of the story. But the plot thickens. The exodus is not just an important historical fact that teaches us lessons about redemption and freedom; the exodus is no less than *THE* seminal event in Jewish history, marking the beginning of the covenantal relationship between God and the entire Jewish people. So important is it that the Kiddush we recite on *other* holidays (Rosh Hashanah, Sukkot, Shavuot) and *every* Shabbat states that we sanctify those days as *a memorial of the Exodus from Egypt*. This is weighty stuff. So weighty, in fact, that the Jewish Tool Kit

admits that she finds it a little overwhelming sometimes. Are we to clean the house, cook a huge meal, host a seder *and personally experience redemption too*? That's a tall order...and one that we should all think about some more (and maybe discuss at the seder!). In the meantime, The Jewish Tool Kit is thinking of you, and wishes you a joyous Pesach!

Comments about the Jewish Tool Kit can be sent to JewishToolKit@attglobal.net.

Rabbi Angel's Recommended Readings

Haggadah Recommendations:

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav.

Let Us Begin: The Sha'ar Zahav Haggadah.
Tamara R. Cohen.

The Journey Continues: The Ma'yan Passover Haggadah.
Ma'yan.

David Dishon and Noam Zion.

A Different Night: The Family Participation Haggadah.
Shalom Hartman Institute.

Sue Levi Elwell.

The Open Door: A Passover Haggadah.
Central Conference of American Rabbis.

Joy Levitt and Michael Strassfeld.

A Night of Questions: A Passover Haggadah.
Jewish Reconstructionist Federation.

Naomi Nimrod and E.M. Broner.

The Women's Haggadah.

Harper San Francisco.

And other Passover-oriented readings:

Yitshak Reiner, ed.

Studies on the Haggadah from the Teachings of
Nechama Leibowitz.

Urim Publications.

Rebecca Schwartz, ed.

All the Women Followed Her: Writings on
Miriam the Prophet and the Women of the Exodus.
Rikudei Miriam Press.

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SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday evening, June 21

for CSZ's Silver Party: 25 Years of Pride

Saturday, June 21 marks the summer solstice, Pride Month and, most importantly, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav's Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Celebration. There will be music, dancing, food, refreshments and other special treats – a reason to wear something festive, perhaps in shades of silver, black and white. The cost will be \$50 per person; venue to be announced.

The 25th Anniversary celebration committee needs volunteers to help us make this party a fantastic success. Please contact Sharyn Saslafsky (sharynn@ix.net-com.com or 415/626-7681) for information about the next meeting and how you can volunteer to help to create a night to remember.

We have been here for 25 years, so let's celebrate with Pride!

Chesir Honored by UAHC

continued from page 1

Mazel tov to Daniel, Diana and Mike. We rely on your leadership and vision to continue our progressive influence in the Reform movement. May you go from strength to strength, and may those who follow you understand the significance of these first 25 years of our history.

How to Host a Seder

continued from page 1

Note: It is traditional to remove all chametz (food made with leavening) from the house during the observance of Passover. Patricia Lin will be collecting chametz, so if you'd like to observe the custom, bring your chametz items to class. Please RSVP by April 7 to Melanie Kushnir (x305 or mkushnir@shaarzahav.org).

Passover Seder Matching

Do you have some extra space at your first night seder? Are you looking for a first night seder to attend? Please contact Melanie Kushnir (x305) if you would like to be matched for a seder. It is a mitzvah to welcome people into your home on Passover!

Synagogue Information

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

290 Dolores Street
415/861-6932 (voice); 415/861-6081 (fax)
office@shaarzahav.org (email) • http://www.shaarzahav.org (web)

CSZ Staff

Rabbi

Camille Shira Angel (x 301)
• rabbiangel@shaarzahav.org

Interim Executive Director

James Carlson (x 308)
• jcarlson@shaarzahav.org

Program Director

Melanie Kushnir (x 305)
mkushnir@shaarzahav.org

Director of Children's and Family Education

Sue Bojdak (x 302)
• educator@shaarzahav.org

Kadimah Head Teacher

Phyllis Mintzer

Administrative Assistant

Joe Marin (x 304)
• jmarin@shaarzahav.org

Rabbi's Assistant

Gabby Volodarsky (x 310)
• gabby@shaarzahav.org

Membership Assistant

Alison Gilbert (x 316)
• agilbert@shaarzahav.org

Officers

President, Lisa Katz
(415/821-7746)
• lkatz1@juno.com or
• president@shaarzahav.org
Vice President, Arthur Slepian
Vice President, Jeffrey Sherman
Treasurer, Gail Ludwig
Recorder, Ray Bernstein

Va'ad Board Members

David Gellman (ex-officio)
Marianne Balin
Ron Edelman
Leslie Kane
Nancy Kates
Laura Lowe
Ron Miguel
Drew Parker-Rose
Karen Schiller
Howard Steiermann

Members wishing to contact any Va'ad member or committee chair are invited to obtain his or her number from the synagogue office.

Bikkur Cholim: If you or a friend who is a member of Sha'ar Zahav are ill in the hospital or at home, and would like to have a member of the Bikkur Cholim Committee call or visit, please notify the synagogue office

Committee Chairs

Adult Education, Ron Edelman and Joss Eldredge
Baby Chavurah, by committee
Bequests and Donations, Richard Inlander
Bikkur Cholim, open
Book Group, Mark Mackler
Building and Grounds, Beth Sousa
Bylaws, Richard Inlander
Children's Education Board, Ruthy Talansky
Cemetery, Richard Inlander
Dues, Tiela Chalmers, Laura Lowe, Ron Lezell
East Bay Chavurah, Ida Kuluk and Larry Wexler
Endowment Fund, David Stein
Experiment in Congregational Education, Dan Bellm
Finance, Gail Ludwig
Fine Arts, Barbara Cymrot
Fund for the Future, Laura Lowe and Richard Meyerson
Fundraising, Arthur Slepian
Gift Shop, Jeff Rubin
Israel Committee, Miki Goralsky and Steve Mazer
Kesher/Connection, Marianne Balin and Geri Kahn
Leadership Development, Paul Cohen
Library, Bernard Schertzer
Long-Range Planning, Arthur Slepian and Claudia Bernard
Membership Outreach, Tony Harris
Mishkan Dolores Capital Campaign, Deborah Udin
Newsletter, Karen Schiller
• newsletter@shaarzahav.org
Outreach, Mark Gershman and Daphne Stuart
Past Presidents' Council, Diana Buchbinder
Personnel, Jeff Sherman
Public Relations, Sharyn Saslafsky and Marc Wernick
Rabbi Liaison, Ora Prochovnick
Ritual, Howard Steiermann
Social Action, AJ Turpin, Craig Persiko, Susan Lubeck
25th Anniversary Committee, Sharyn Saslafsky and Terrett Drake
UAHC National Liaison, Mike Rankin
UAHC Regional Liaison, Daniel Chesir
WCGLBJO Liaison, David Gellman
Web and I.T., Drew Parker-Rose

Member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Jews



The Israel Committee

Deepening our community's connection to the people, culture, history and land of Israel

Feminist Movement Takes Hold in the Israeli Orthodox Community

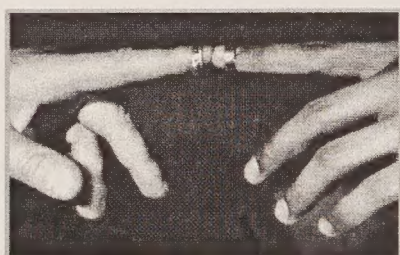
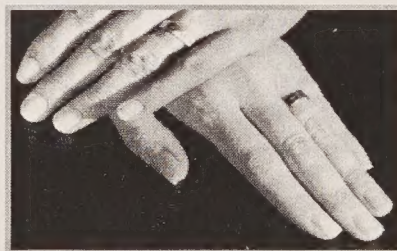
Feminism is not the first thing that springs to mind when talking about Orthodox Judaism. "Equal rights" for women is a complicated issue in the Orthodox world, where religious rights are inextricably linked to religious *obligations*. But in Israel, a quiet revolution is underway in which the Orthodox world is re-examining areas where modern life and Orthodoxy collide. For traditional Jews who accept the binding nature of halacha (Jewish law), change has been slow.

But change is happening. Throughout most of Jewish history, women's formal Jewish education consisted of limited study of the Bible (but not Talmud or Jewish law). In recent years the boundaries of women's Torah learning have steadily expanded, and today there are seventeen major women's yeshivot (religious schools) in Israel, where women are studying at unprecedented levels of scholarship. The inevitable result of women's high-level Torah learning has been a movement toward a greater role in the public spheres of religious life, from which they have traditionally been excluded. For example, women now serve as attorneys in Israel's rabbinic courts. Rabbinic attorney Rivka Lubitch sees this trend continuing, "We need to try many new things, within the halachic framework, until we figure out where we want to go."

Jerusalem Rabbi Mendel Shapiro caused an earthquake in the Orthodox world when he issued a halachic opinion arguing that traditional barriers to women's synagogue Torah reading are no longer relevant. "It's an idea whose time has come," he said. Rabbi Shapiro himself attends Shira Chadasha, an Orthodox congregation in Jerusalem, where women take an active role in organizing the service, including reading from the sefer Torah. Shira Chadasha settled into the community without controversy, according to Shapiro, and it regularly draws 200 people to services. "The congregation still accepts the authority of halacha," says Rabbi Shapiro, "and recognizes that within halacha there are a variety of models." Blu Greenberg, well-known Orthodox writer and founder of the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance, feels that Rabbi Shapiro's ruling "is a powerful statement about the redefinition of women's role, status and presence in the community." She said, "Conflicts between feminist values and Orthodoxy can be resolved in a manner consistent with Jewish law. And expanding women's roles within a halachic framework can only serve to strengthen and enrich the whole community."

For more information about the Israel Committee please contact co-chairs Steve Mazer (steve@rezam.com) or Miki Goralsky (goralsky@access4less.net).

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February Va'ad Minutes

President Lisa Katz introduced discussion of the Friday night service time. 148 members responded to the unscientific survey on service time and child care. A large majority favored 7:30 pm, but there were strong and important voices in favor of 8:15 pm. After extensive discussion about the starting time of the services, process, input, strategy and timing of the decision, we unanimously approved the following proposal: Lisa will send an email to the congregation, explaining that the sense of the Va'ad is to try a new practice of holding erev Shabbat services at 7:30 – except for the first Friday of each [secular] month, when services will be at 8:15. The email will ask for reactions and the Va'ad will vote on implementation of this schedule at the March meeting. There will *not* be a vote on this at the Congregation Meeting, because more people can have input through this revised process than at the annual meeting.

continued on page 11

The Evolution of a Doer

by Prudence Carter

Geri Kahn, co-chair of the Kesher (Connection) Committee was profiled as a new member for the JGF about two years ago. In the time that has elapsed, Geri went from new member to a committee member and now to committee co-chair. This evolution is something that Geri and the community should be proud of because it demonstrates how a person can enter the shul knowing perhaps one other person and in a short time become a vital part of our community by working on a committee.

JGF: Geri, tell us about your journey here at CSZ. How did you decide to become involved?

Geri: People told me that the best way to meet people was to get involved in the synagogue – by taking a class or joining a committee. I did not know anyone when I joined CSZ so I joined a committee. It has turned out to be a great way to meet people and become involved in the synagogue at the same time. Within the first few months of joining the synagogue I met Joe Hample, who was part of the greeter group and on the Kesher committee. In about three months I too became a greeter, which, by the way, is a great opportunity to meet many members. After about three months, I joined the Kesher committee.

JGF: What was joining a committee like?

Geri: Well, at first I said to myself, why am I doing this? It was frustrating, we would talk and talk and it seemed that nothing was accomplished. Then, thanks to a great deal of hard work by members of our committee, we held what is now our annual

Open House. It was the biggest accomplishment of our committee and was a successful event. The Kesher folks are so committed to making things happen.

JGF: What in your Jewish upbringing made you want to connect and contribute?

Geri: Being part of the Jewish community has always been with me. I was born in Arizona and raised in San Jose where I participated in a synagogue, went to religious school, had a bat mitzvah and was active in Jewish youth groups. In college, I was active in Hillel. I also studied abroad for a year in Israel. In law school I was involved with the Jewish law students' association. I found law school to be a bit alienating at times (actually most of the time), so I found a great sense of comfort being with other Jewish law students at our monthly Shabbat potlucks and other events. Being involved in the Jewish community has always been a part of my life in one way or another.

JGF: You live in Benicia which is a little far from us. What keeps you coming to CSZ? What advice would you give new members?

Geri: There is not a community like this one in the East Bay; I know that if I needed anything, the CSZ community would be there for me, even if it meant coming to Benicia! I go to services on Friday nights as often as I can and somehow I just feel I need to be at CSZ. For new members, my advice would be the same that was given to me – to get involved by taking a class, volunteering at an event or joining a committee. It will give you a sense of energy and inspiration.

Va'ad minutes

continued from page 10

The vast majority of members responding to the survey felt that childcare was positive or neutral experience for them. We agreed to support some form of childcare, and to discuss childcare issues in March.

Gail Ludwig delivered the Treasurer's Report. Our experience of the current economy will result in a very conservative budget for next year. We should also plan for the next few years, including what to do if there is a continued recession.

Co-Chair Terrett Drake reported on 25th Anniversary celebration and fundraiser plans. There will be a 1920s deco post-havdalah event for adults, with some alcohol and food. We thanked Terrett for taking this on.

Laura Lowe and Richard Myerson have agreed to be Fund for the Future co-chairs.

They proposed a donor recognition system with bands of donation levels corresponding to the colors of the rainbow flag.

Rabbi Angel reported on her trip to D.C. with our 12 Religious Action Center teens. They lobbied about a variety of issues and had a healing discussion about their varying views on Israel. They went to the new exhibit on Homosexuality and the Holocaust and encouraged others to visit that exhibit. Other group leaders requested the return of last year's talk on having two moms. Our students responded with grace and humor to homophobia expressed by other RAC students.

The Interfaith service, "Prayers of Peace in Anticipation of War," was attended by over 100 people from the community. Coming up: Rabbi Angel's pulpit exchange with the Reverend Penny Nixon on the weekend before Yom Hasho'ah.

Lisa Katz reported that the Shabbat at Home proposal, which previously conflicted with the early erev Shabbat service time, will be changed, either to dinner before a later Friday service or to a Saturday brunch.

Interim Executive Director James Carlson reported that the SFPD has provided us with a helpful list of specific security measures to consider. Herbst Theater will not be available to us for Rosh Hashanah; we're still exploring alternatives.

Pride 2003

It's already time to start planning for Pride! We are looking for some fabulous, CSZ-inspired ideas and volunteers for the parade. If you would like to volunteer your time and creative energy to make Sha'ar Zahav visible and fierce at this year's festivities, please contact Melanie Kushnir (x305 or mkushnir@shaarzahav.org).

Donations

AIDS Fund

Neil E. Hart

-in memory of Joel Lauden.

Richard Sinkoff

-in memory of Stephen Jay Mistler.

Chesir-Stein Music Fund

Steve Elman and Tom Holt

-in appreciation of

Scholar-in-Residence weekend.

-in honor of Reuben Zellman's

acceptance to HUC Rabbinic School.

Children's Education Fund

Allan Berenstein

-in honor of Naftali Bojdak-Yates.

Sue Bojdak and Debra Yates

-in honor of Jeanette Nichols and
Daryl Goldman.

George and Phyllis Mintzer

-in memory of Lewis Weinberger and
Zelda Wasserman.

-in honor of Ron Lezell's birthday.

Michael Schaffer

-in honor of Sue, Deb, Itai and
Naftali Bojdak-Yates.

Richard Sinkoff

-in memory of Alice Bernholz Sinkoff.

Ami Zusman

-in honor of Naftali Bojdak-Yates.

Fund for the Future

James Carlson

-in honor of Drew Parker-Rose.

General Fund

Paul Cohen

-in honor of A.J. Turpen and
Ina Fried's wedding.

-in honor of Irene Ogus's re-election
to the Board of Sinai Memorial
Chapel.

Rick Crane

-in memory of Gary Starliper.

Marta Drury

-in honor of naming of
Benjamin Park-Rogers Timoner.

Steve Elman and Tom Holt

-in memory of Benjamin Gold.

Robert Gutterman

-in memory of Winifred Gutterman.

Arnie Jackson

-in memory of Phyllis Litman.

Rod Leslie

-in memory of David Leslie.

Ron Lezell

-in honor of Steve Weitz's birthday.

Steve Mazer

-in honor of Tiela Chalmers.

Dan Pollak.

Colette Patt

-in honor of Alfred E. Shavell.

Lisa Ochs

-in honor of Mark Freeman.

-in honor of Fran Frohlich.

-in honor of Jonathan Funk and
Evan Arnold Gordon.

-in honor of Mark Lipschutz.

-in honor of Jeff Rubin.

-in honor of Ruth Rainero and
Pieter de Haan.

Michael Schaffer

-in memory of Louis Schaffer.

Gift of Israel

Richard Sinkoff

-in memory of Ilan Ramon.

Inclusive Liturgy

Lonnie Weiss

-in memory of Margaret Clarke.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

James Carlson

-in honor of Lisa Katz.

Manny Fishman and Leslie Kane.

Felicia Park-Rogers

-in appreciation of Rabbi Angel's
participation in the naming of
Benjamin Jonah.

Richard Sinkoff

-in honor of Rabbi Camille Shira Ang
and Rabbi Benay Lappe.

Eve Zysman

-in memory of Dr. Andrew S. Zysman.

Social Action

Allan Berenstein

-in memory of Kay Leyser.

Tzedakah Project

Rose Katz.

In Memory of Edward Gellman

Paul Cohen.

Steve Elman and Tom Holt.

Lisa Katz.

Marc A. Lipschutz.

In Honor of Daniel Chesir's installation as President of the UAHC's Pacific Central West Region

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Thank you to the following individuals whose financial contributions underwrote the Scholar-in-Residence weekend with Rabbi Benay Lappe.

Randy Ellen Blaustein
-in honor of Rabbi Lappe.

Rachel Maclachlan and Nancy Silverrod
-in honor of Batya Kalis.

Michael Sarid
-in honor of Rabbi Angel and Rabbi Lappe for their vision of the future of queer Judaism.

Marianne Balin and Prudence Carter.

David Bianco.

Dan Bellm and Rabbi Yoel Kahn.

Diana Buchbinder and Jeane Redsecker.

James Carlson.

Paul Cohen and Bob Gutterman.

Manny Fishman and Leslie Kane.

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Laura Lowe.

Eileen Lynette.

Richard Meyerson.

Carolyn Pines and Judy Schwartz.

Jeffrey Sherman.

Arthur Slepian and Gerry Llamado.

Jane Stepak.

Lisa Szer.

Larry Wexler.

Condolences

Donald Abrams, on the death of his step-father, Sanford Lavin.

Harold Podgur, on the death of his cousin, Marsha Lewis Burton.

Seth Skolnick, on the death of his aunt, Blanche Skorupski.

Jonathan Pannor, on the death of his grandfather, Leon Alpers.

Ora Prochovnick, on the death of her cousin, Goldie Resnick.

Sam Lefkowitz, on the death of her father, Irving Lefkowitz.

David Stein, on the death of his uncle, Jules Shuchat.

Publish Your Wedding Announcement in the *Jewish Bulletin*

By Robert Tat

When Sha'ar Zahav began in 1978, the first leaders tried to place an advertisement in the then *San Francisco Jewish Bulletin* newspaper to announce the location of our services and encourage gay and lesbian Jews to attend. The newspaper would not accept our advertisement, since we were a "gay synagogue." Times have changed....

The Jewish Bulletin of Northern California now regularly carries news on the Bay Area's Jewish LGBT community, often publishing two or three articles a week. Marc S. Klein, the *Bulletin's* editor and publisher, finds the gay community a vibrant, active community that generates interesting news, and he wants to cover it. I serve on the newspaper's board of directors, along with Rabbi Angel who currently holds the rabbinic seat on the board.

All of this being said, it came as no surprise last fall when the *Bulletin's* board voted unanimously to print announcements of homosexual unions alongside heterosexual announcements. Both will be listed under the "weddings" headline in the life cycles section. "We thought it was time to acknowledge that gay and lesbian couples

join together and form families just as heterosexual couples do," said Louis Hass, the *Bulletin's* board president. Editor Marc S. Klein decided to raise the issue following *The New York Times'* decision last fall to include gay and lesbian couples in its Sunday Styles section along with heterosexual weddings.

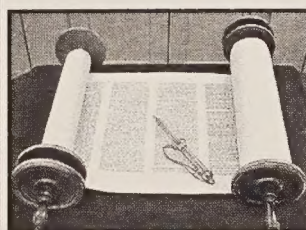
The *Bulletin* requires the following criteria to publish an announcement: at least one of the partners must be Jewish, the couple must have participated in a public Jewish ceremony and the couple must have filed in some city or town as registered domestic partners.

To submit an announcement go to www.jewishsf.com; under the Contact Us link, go to Lifecycle Event Forms and select Wedding Announcement. Fill out the form and press the submit button. Photographs can be sent electronically or via mail. You may also mail or fax the information to: Jewish Bulletin of Northern California, 220 Bush Street, Suite 1480, Att: Ben Peterson, San Francisco, CA 94104 or fax 415/263-7222.

If you don't read the *Bulletin* and would like to, a free six-week trial subscription is available for Sha'ar Zahav members. Call the paper at 415/263-7200, tell them you are from Sha'ar Zahav and ask for your free trial subscription.

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1	Merle Malakoff
2	Eliana Chalmers Frank
2	Jeremy Saz
3	Eric Geffner
3	Quinn Klaiman
5	Jerome Goldstein
5	Adam Levine
6	Edward Schultz
7	Eli Agre Baum
7	Lawrence Best
7	Judy Macks
7	Anya Prussin
7	Robert Schwartz
8	Anna Katz
8	Phyllis Schneider
9	Eli Barnes
9	Emily Newfield
10	Glen Hauer
11	Caryn Aviv
11	Sydney Klaiman
11	Liam Klaiman
11	Johanna Klaiman
12	Dev Felder Noily
12	Asher Kapsack
12	Zoe Kapsack
12	Susan Leff
13	Bonnie Kates
13	Avidan Rene Novogrodsky-Godt
14	Barbara Braasch
14	Lyssa Friedman

14	Marjorie Hilsenrad
14	Jacob Rothman
16	Peter Barnes
16	Susan Borowitz
16	Tim Detmers
16	Robert Gordon
16	Juliet Neidish
16	Jeanette Nichols
17	Diana Buchbinder
17	Eva Konigsberg
17	Frank Sieple
18	Donald Fischer
18	Naomi Szoke
19	Martin Spector
20	Helen Cohen
20	Jessica Goldstein
20	Aaron Nacamulli
22	Lisa Szer
23	Sara Haber
23	Joshua Muller
24	Jeri Lynn Cohen
24	Joyce Garay
24	Eliana Kaimowitz
24	Evan Puckett
24	Karen Schiller
25	Brian Ellis
25	Melissa Packer
26	Andre Fournier
27	Adam Barrett
27	Victoria Weiser
30	Lynn Eden
30	Judith Klain

Anniversaries



4	Lucy Bernholz and Paula Fleisher
10	Carolyn Pines and Judy Schwartz
21	Rena Frantz and Ora Prochovnick
29	Barbara Leff and Arlene Singer
30	Nicole Bloom and Sue Swigart

Naches



- To **Jonah Levy** on his concerto performance as part of The Prometheus Symphony.
- To **Patricia Lin** who has been appointed Scholar-in-Residence at the Institute for Leadership Development and Study of Pacific and Asian North American Religion at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley.
- To **Reuben Zellman** on his acceptance into rabbinic school at the Hebrew Union College in New York.
- To the **Bojdak-Yates family** on the naming of Naftali Ilan Bojdak-Yates.
- To **Jeane Redsecker** on receiving her PhD in Learning and Change in Human Systems from the California Institute of Integral Studies.
- To **Emma Buchbinder** on her acceptance to the John Jay School of Criminal Justice.

Oneg, Flower and Childcare Sponsorships

2/7

Friday oneg was sponsored by **Elliot Klein** in honor of Steve Weitz's milestone birthday.



2/21

Bimah flowers were sponsored by **Laura Lowe** in honor of Rabbi Benay Lappe.

Friday oneg was sponsored by **CSZ Past Presidents** in honor of Daniel Chesir's installation as President of the UAHC's Pacific Central West Region.

Friday childcare was sponsored by **Ron Edelman** in memory of Tom Mapp.

2/28

Bimah flowers were sponsored by the **CSZ staff** in honor of Naftali Bojdak-Yates.

Saturday oneg was sponsored by **Sue, Deb, Itai and Naftali Bojdak-Yates**.

Yahrzeits

1	Adam Harris
2	Ron Gertz
3	Abraham Cohen
6	Dennis Mitchell
21	Robert Serman
23	Michael Randall
24	Norma Faini-Pick

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